Legislator University

SSC 306:

An Overview of the Child Welfare System

Colleen Burton, Chair Hilary Brazzell, Policy Chief Christa Calamas, Staff Director

House Health & Human Services Committee





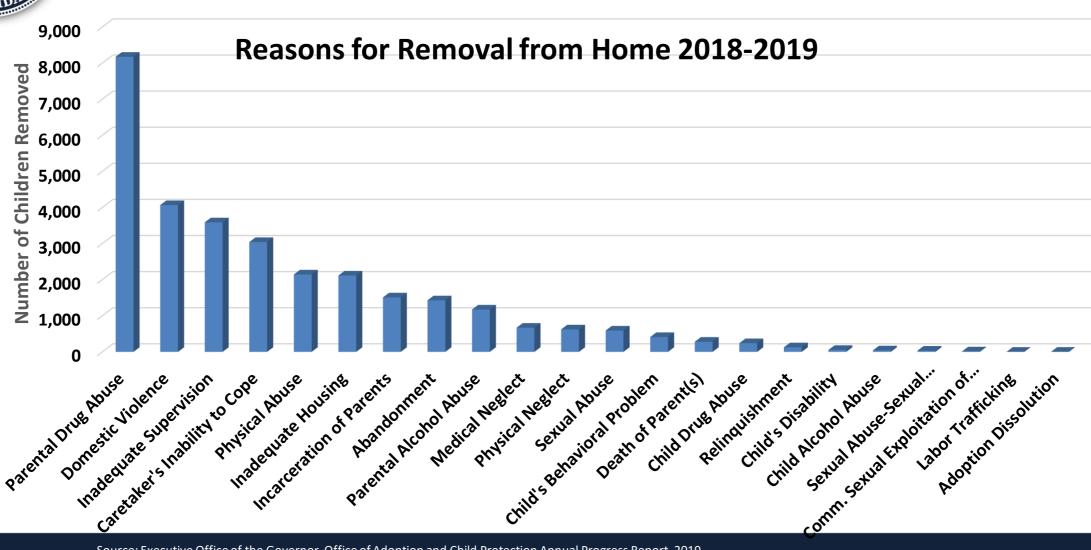
What is Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation?

Acts that:

- Are willful or threatened that result in harm
- Deprive child of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment
- Cause significant impairment
- Many statutory nuances!
 - E.g.--not neglect if family lacks financial means to care for child



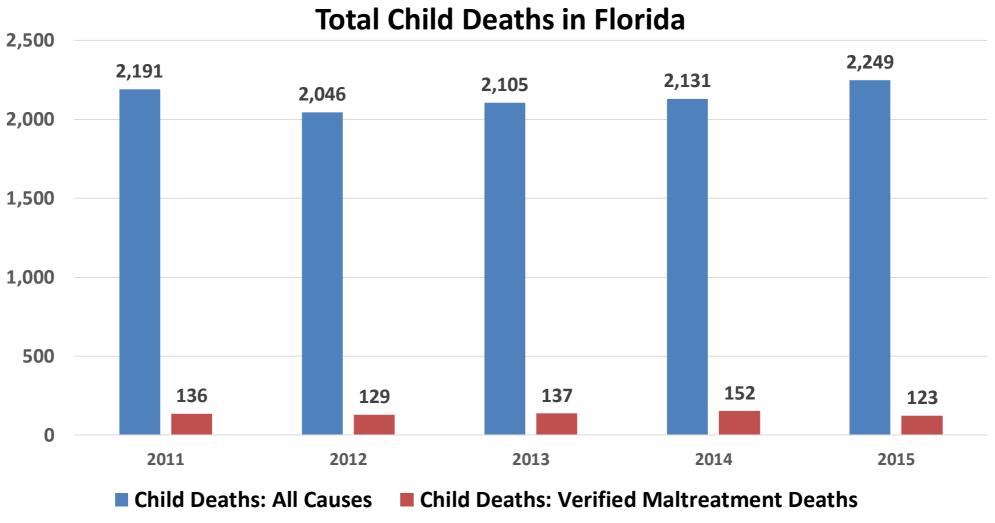
Child Welfare Problem: Many Forms of Maltreatment





Child Welfare Problem:

Many Preventable Deaths from Child Abuse and Neglect

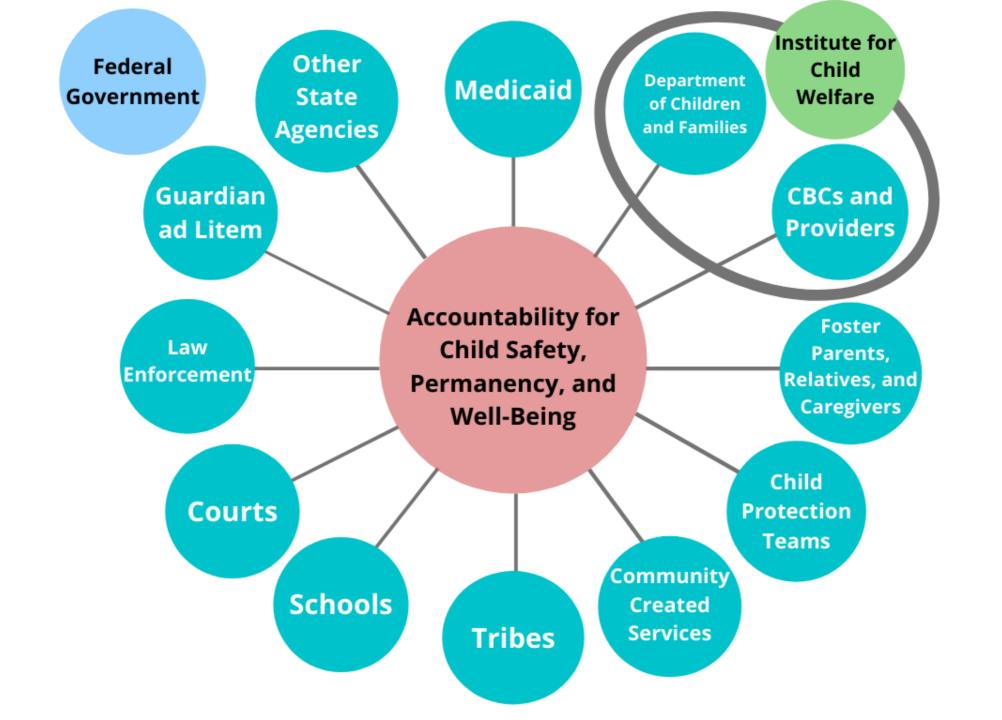




Florida's Child Welfare System Is Asked to Do Many Things

Ch. 39, F.S., lists 16 goals for the child welfare system, such as:

- provide for the care, safety, and protection of children
- preserve and strengthen the child's family ties whenever possible
- ensure that permanent placement with the biological or adoptive family is achieved as soon as possible





Child Welfare Problem: Complex Structure

Federal influence

- Significant funding—with lots of strings attached
- Major recent and ongoing changes in state policy and operations:
 - 2006: Title IV-E funding waiver which allowed significant flexibility and innovation
 - 2019: Waiver eliminated--transition back to restrictive funding/service rules
 - 2021: Preparing for future—Family First Prevention Services Act

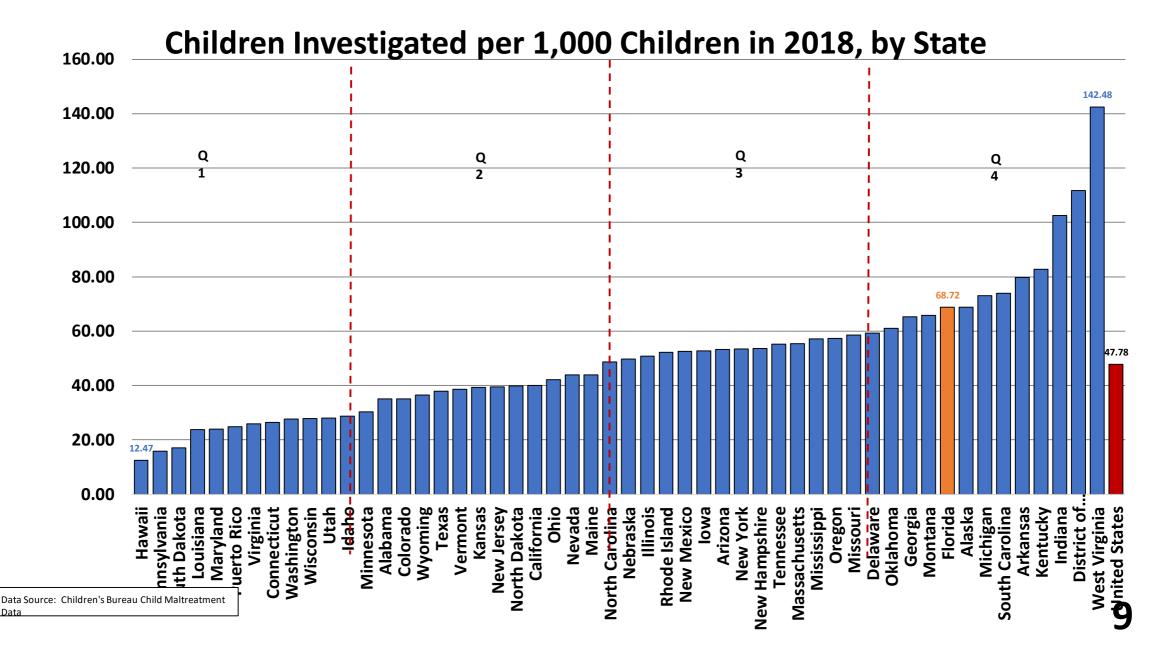


Child Welfare Problem: Complex Structure

DCF and its contractors

- DCF performs child welfare investigations except where sheriffs perform them
- DCF also provides attorney services—except where the Attorney General or state attorneys do so
- Community-based care lead agencies (CBCs) and their subcontracted service providers offer inhome, foster care and adoption services

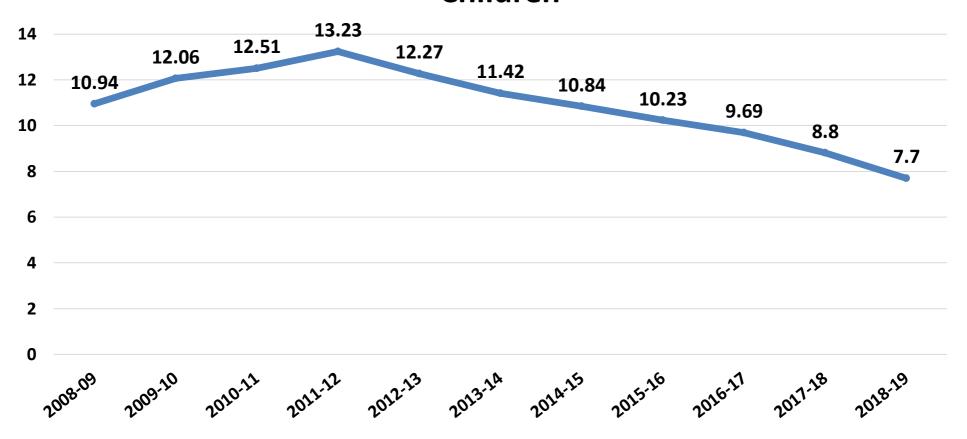
How Many Children and Families are Investigated?



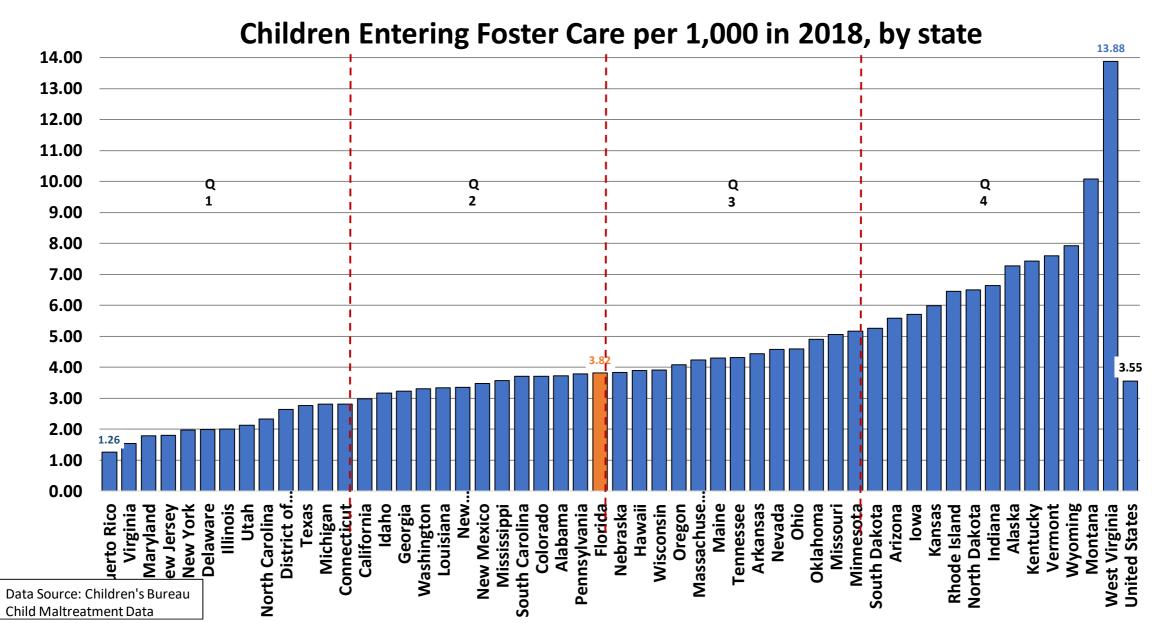


How Many Children are Maltreated?

Florida's Child Maltreatment Rate per 1,000 Children



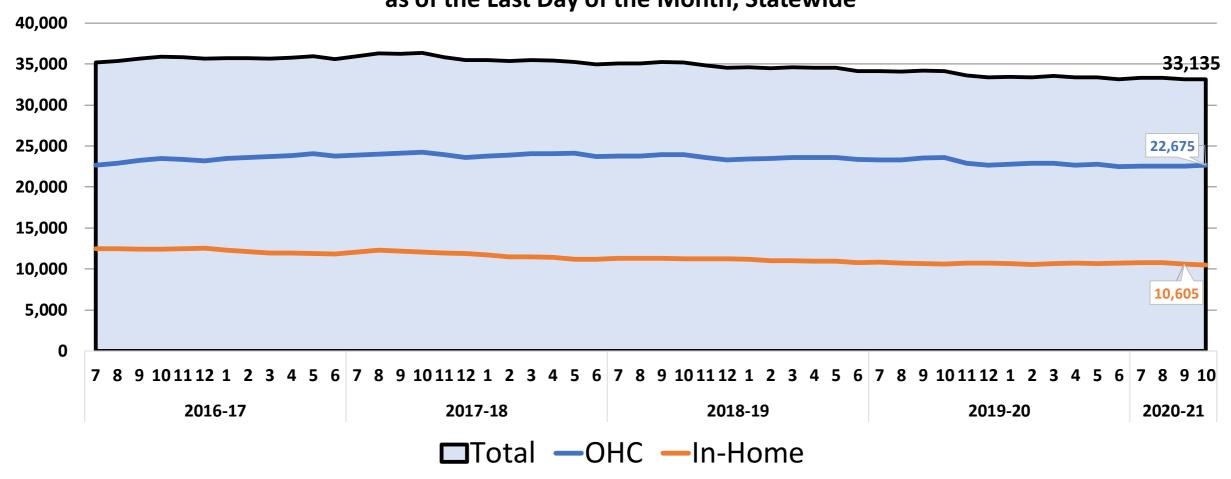
How Many Children Enter Foster Care?





What are Children's Living Settings During DCF Involvement?

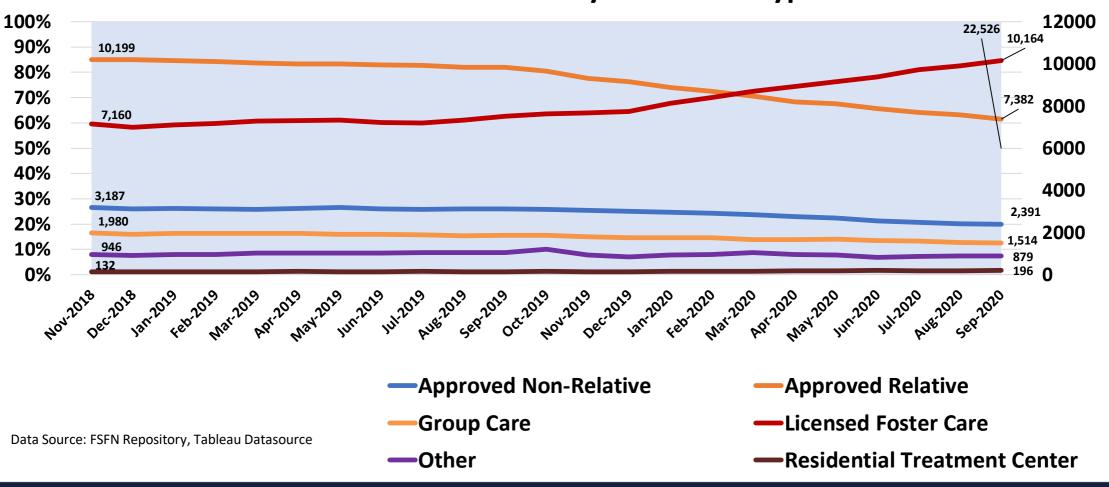
Children Served Out-of-Home Care and In-Home as of the Last Day of the Month, Statewide





What are Children's Living Settings During DCF Involvement?

Children in Out-Of-Home Care by Placement Type



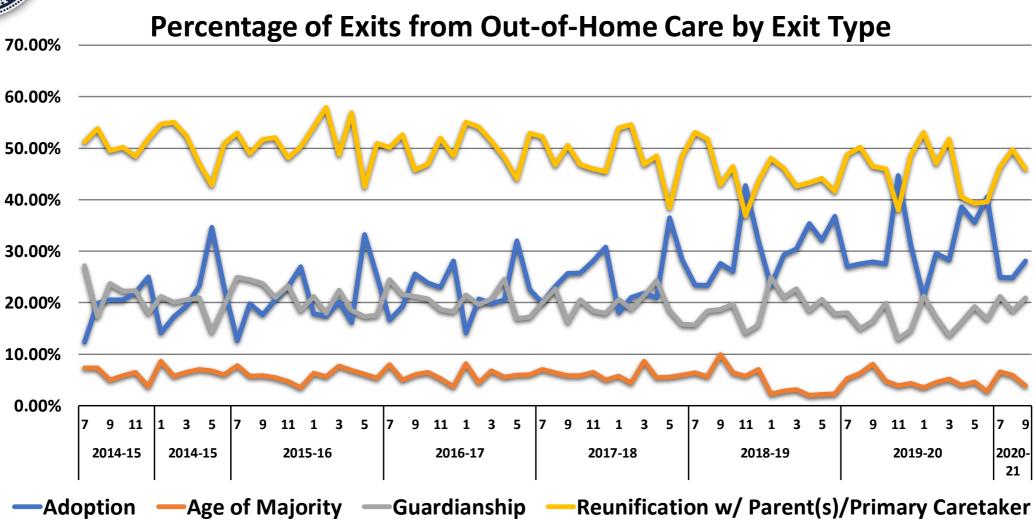


What Services Can Children and Families Receive?

- Family Support Services
- Parenting education
- Domestic violence intervention
- Specialized substance abuse treatment
- Mental health services
- Case management
- Material support



What are Outcomes for Children?





What Tools Does the Legislature Have?

- Regulation
- Resources
- Outcomes measurement
- Transparency



Child Welfare Tools: Regulation

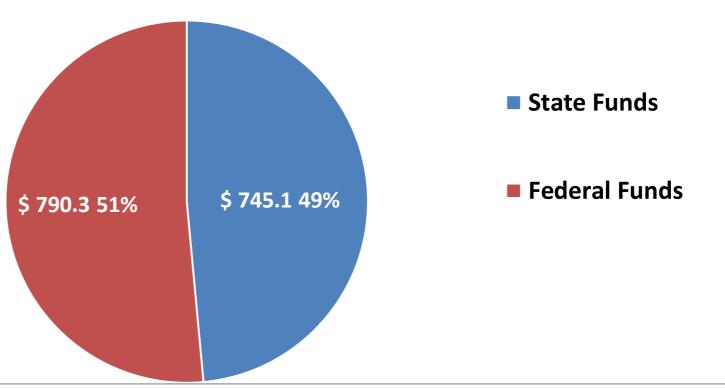
Recent legislation:

- Outlined criteria for judges to consider when changing a child's placement
- Specified timeframes for licensing foster parents
- Detailed how foster parents should work together with birth parents
- Strengthened DCF's ability to hold contractors accountable for performance



Child Welfare Tools: State and Federal Funding







Child Welfare Tools: Resources – Investigation Funding

Child Protective Investigation Appropriations: Sheriffs and DCF



→Sheriffs

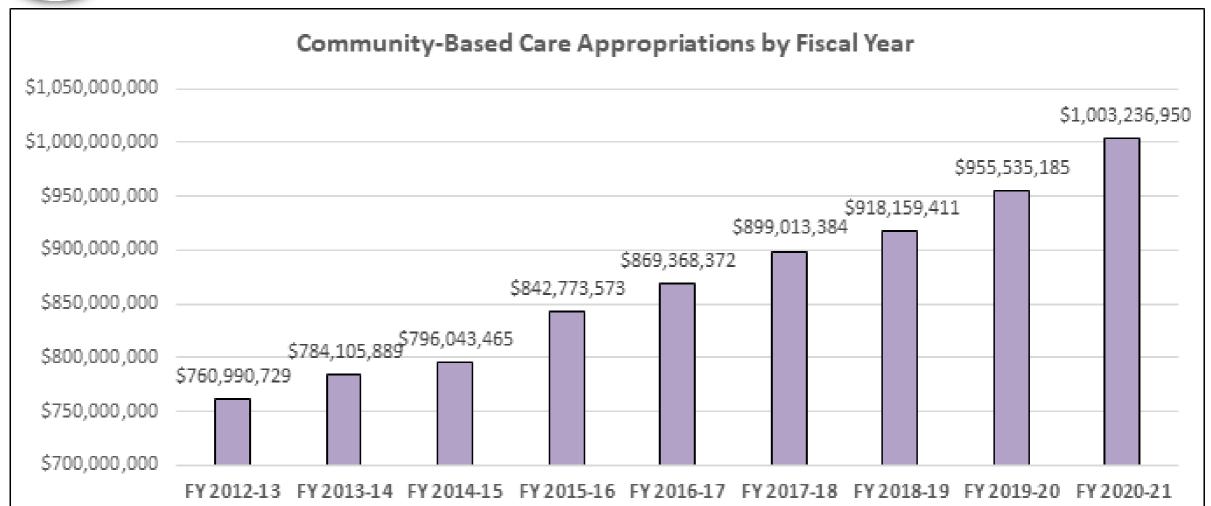
DCF

Sheriffs perform child protective investigations in Broward, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole Counties, and as of 2018, Walton County.

FY 2014-15 FY 2015-16 FY 2016-17 FY 2017-18 FY 2018-19



Child Welfare Tools: Resources – CBC Funding

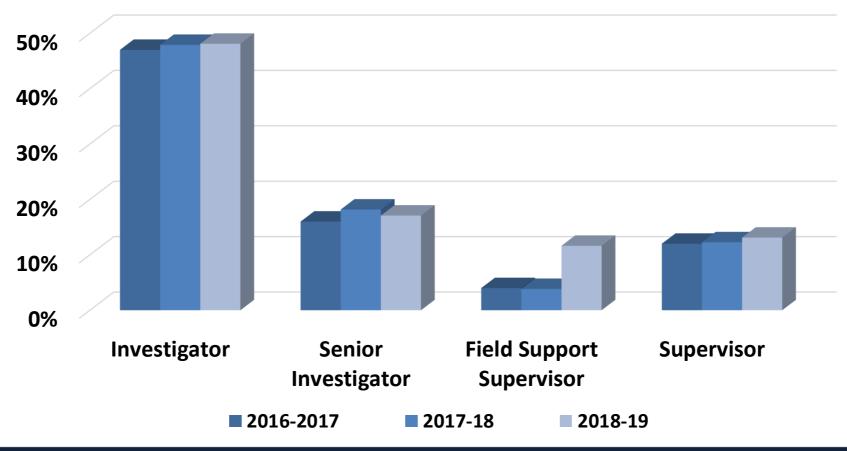


Source: Florida LASPBS, December 2020 $\overline{2}$



Child Welfare Tools: Resources – Personnel

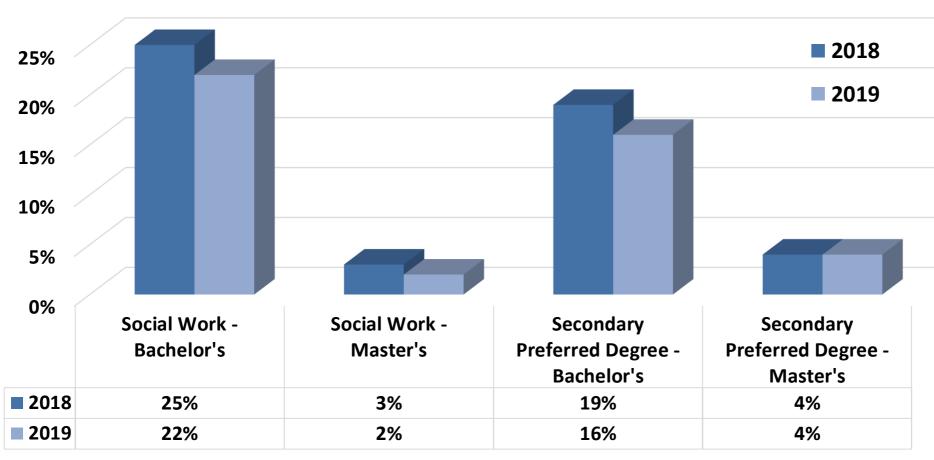
DCF Child Protective Investigative Staff Turnover By Position, FY 2016-17 through 2018-2019



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Child Welfare Tools: Resources – Personnel

Social Work and Secondary Preferred Degree Attainment by DCF Child Protective Investigative Staff: 2018 and 2019



Source: Child Protective Investigator and Child Protective Investigator

Supervisor Educational Qualifications, Turnover, and Working Conditions

Status Reports, DCF,
Oct. 1, 2018, and Oct. 1, 2019. Data as of August 2018 and June 2019.

Secondary preferred degrees include those in psychology, sociology, counseling, special education, education, human development, child development, family development, marriage and family therapy, and nursing.



Child Welfare Tools: Resources – Knowledge Generation





Child Welfare Tools: Resources – Knowledge Generation



PROJECT TITLE: THE FLORIDA STUDY OF PROFESSIONALS FOR SAFE FAMILIES (FSPSF) PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Dina J. Wilke, PhD, MSW Florida lawmakers sign off

skilled services.— Pre-service training begins the process or developing these skills. Organizations shape the knowledge and expectations of new workers through training, which often include didactic classroom experiences and opportunities for new hires to shadow and learn from more experienced workers. Content delivery strategies, skill development apportunities, and the amount and structure of days in the field all influence preparedness for child welfare work. Moreover, investment in training can decrease turnover, ³⁴ a significant national priority to impact the effective delive of services to children and their families. Thus, practices that increas worker confidence and competence to provide services are importan

TRAINING CONTEXT

In Florida, multiple groups of workers typically come together in a centralized location for the classroom-based portion of in roma, imagine groups or workers spicially contributed to a contributed to death of the description of the classicum-cases proton or pre-previous training. As an example, training for child protective investigation is generally organized across a description of the proton of the contributed to the contributed to the contributed to the classical collection of the contributed to the classical collection of the contributed to the collection of classical contributed to the collection of classical collection of the contributed to the collection of classical collection of the contributed to the collection of classical collection of the co

The Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families is a longitudinal study of newly-hired child welfare workers throughou Florida. Participants were eligible if they were 1) involved in pre-service training; and 2) working toward Florida certificatio as a Child Protective Investigator or Dependency Case Manager, Baseline data were collected between September 2015 and December 2016, with 86% of newly hired workers across Florida completing initial surveys (N - 1.501). Participants complete a second survey six months following baseline data collection, and 87% of the original sample responded (n - 1.306). The six-month time period represents approximately two to three months of pre-service training and three to four months of casework with children and families.

Data for this analysis focus on the transition experiences of new workers leaving pre-service training and beginning casework in their employing agency or service certific, hereinafter referred to as agency. Study participants were asked about the availability or specialized mentioning as they begin caseload responsibilities, the number of cases received in the first week providing services. and perceptions of the consistency between agency practice and education received during classroom-based training. This and purposes as used to predict departure (tumpore) within the first six months of employment, a group of workers referred to us "outly leavers." Chi-square and clost analyses were used to detect differences between early leavers and those who remain cogistic regression was used to predict the likelihood of early departure.

CS for SB 1326, 1st Engrossed

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An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 20.19, F.S.; requiring the Department of Children and Families to establish performance metrics; specifying goals that must be established; revising and providing duties of community alliances; revising membership of community alliances; amending s. 39.3065, F.S.; requiring sheriffs providing certain services to adopt the child welfare practice model; requiring sheriffs providing certain services to monitor program performance and meet, at least quarterly, to collaborate on specified quality assurance and initiatives; requiring the department to conduct an annual evaluation of the sheriffs' program performance based on certain criteria; requiring the department to submit an annual report on certain information by a specified date; providing report requirements; amending s. 402.402, F.S.; requiring the department to implement certain policies and programs; requiring the annual report to include information on professional advancement of child protective investigators and supervisors; requiring attorneys contracting with the department to receive certain training within a specified time; creating s. 402.715, F.S.; requiring the department to establish an Office of Quality; providing duties of the office; amending s. 402.7305, F.S.; removing limitations on monitoring of childcaring or child-placing services providers; amending s. 409.988, F.S.; revising the duties of a lead

Page 1 of 42 CODING: Words etricken are deletions; words underlined are additions. Bill now goes to Gov. Ron DeSantis



on child welfare changes

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - With House sponsor Mel Ponder, R-Destin, saying he would like to see the Department of Children and Families viewed as a "gateway of hope," lawmakers gave final approval Wednesday to a bill that would make wide-ranging changes in the child-welfare system

House members voted 117-0 to approve the bill (SB 1326), which also was unanimously approved this week by the Senate. It now will go to Gov. Ron DeSantis.

The bill, in part, seeks to bolster child-protective investigators, including taking steps to "mitigate and prevent the impact of secondary traumatic stress and burnout" among the front-line workers. Also, it calls for developing an expanded "career ladder" for child-protective investigation staff members. The bill, in part, also would establish an Office of Quality in the department to address issues such as performance standards and metrics.

The bill was sponsored in the Senate by incoming Senate President Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, and had highpowered support from House Speaker Jose Oliva, R-Miami Lakes, and Florida First Lady Casey DeSantis.

Source: https://www.news4iax.com/news/florida/2020/03/11/floridalawmakers-sign-off-on-child-welfare-changes/

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY The College of Social Work





Child Welfare Tools: Outcomes Measurement

Federal Measure	FY 2019 Q4	FY 2020 Q1	FY 2020 Q2	FY 2020 Q3	FY 2020 Q4	FY 2021 Q1	Target
M01: Rate of abuse per 100,000 days in foster care	8 46	8.21	7.31	6.98	6.7	6.3	8.5 Lower
M02: % of children with no recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months	92.90%	92.78%	92.97%	92.94%	93.05%	93.35%	90.9 Higher
M03: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months of entering care	39.82%	38.66%	38.55%	38.00%	37.20%	36.90%	40.5 Higher
M04: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 12 to 23 months	54.38%	53.24%	54.13%	51.79%	50.63%	51.71%	43.6 Higher
M05: % of children exiting to a permanent home w/in 12 months for those in care 24+ months		48.27%	49.35%	48.22%	48.44%	46.66%	30.3 Higher
M06: % of children who do not re-enter care w/in 12 months of moving to permanent home		90.23%	90.45%	89.90%	89.98%	90.30%	91.7 Higher
M07: Placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care	4.68	4.75	4.55	4.23	3.76	3.53	4.12 Lower
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Below Standard

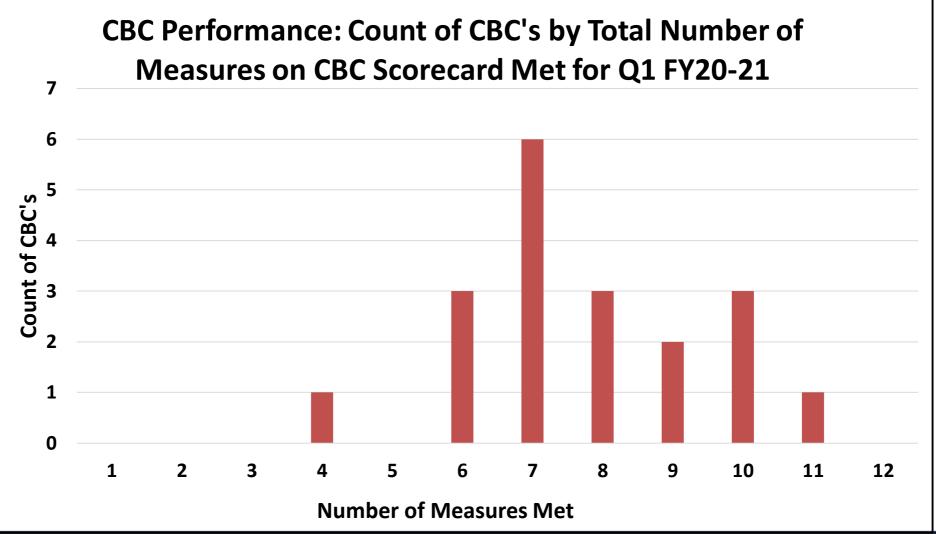
Above Standard

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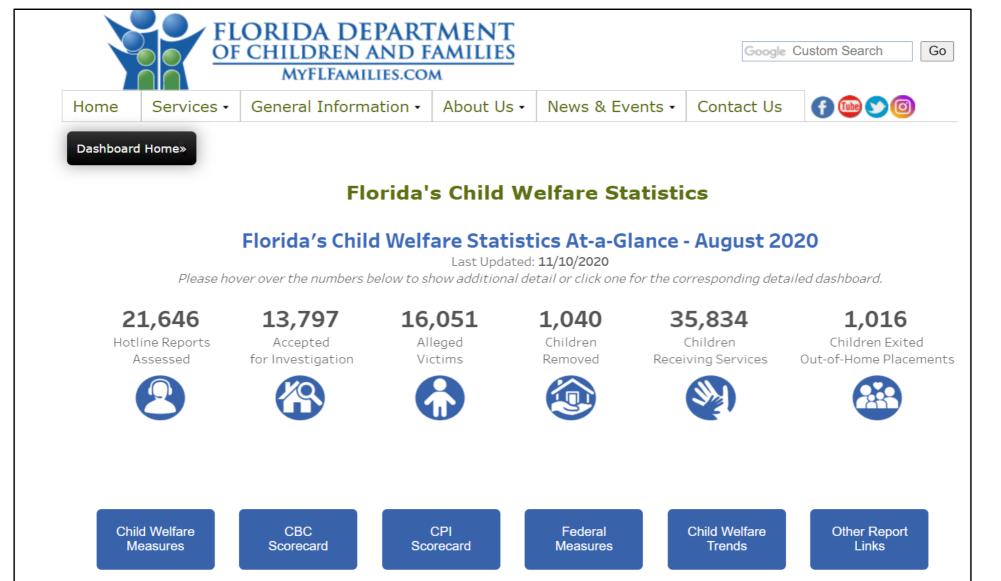
Last updated: 10/20/2020



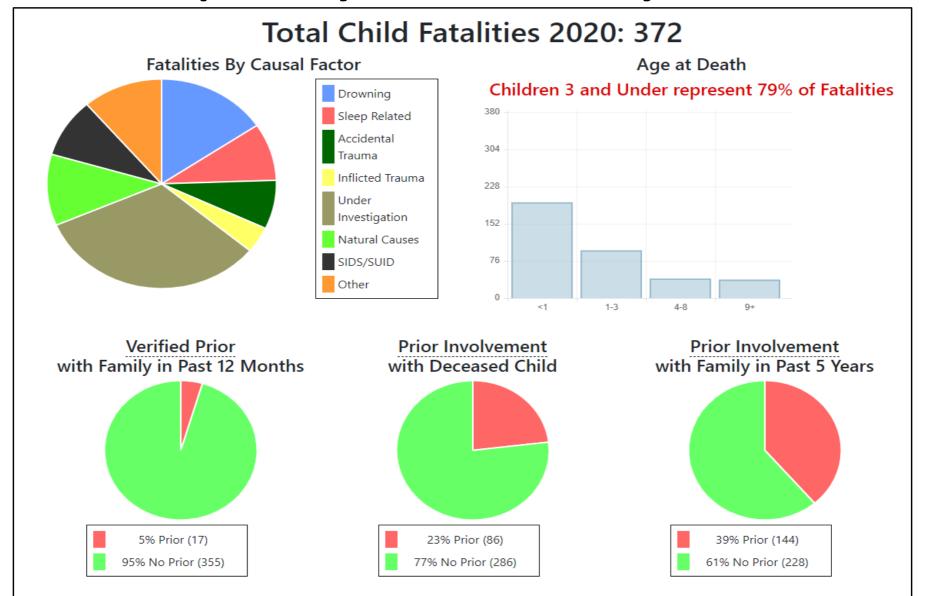
Child Welfare Tools: Outcomes Measurement



Child Welfare Tools: Transparency – Child Welfare Dashboard



Child Welfare Tools: Transparency – Child Fatality Website





What are Current Issues?

- Implementation of new federal child welfare funding legislation
- COVID-related system impacts
- Implementation of accountability initiatives



New Federal Child Welfare Funding Legislation

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA):

- Provides funding match for limited types of prevention services
- Allows use of federal prevention funds to serve a broader array of children and families
- Limits federal funding for placements in congregate settings (group homes)



Current Issues: New Federal Child Welfare Funding Legislation

Impacts to Florida:

- Revenue impact --placement funding vs. prevention funding
- Need for statutory changes to emphasize prevention activities and placement alternatives
- New initiatives and integration with behavioral health service systems



Current Issues: COVID-Related System Impacts

- Fewer hotline calls have led to caseload declines; unclear what long-term impact will be
- Some front-line workers are concerned about exposure
- Increased use of teleconferencing offers benefits and challenges



Current Issues: 2020 Legislation on Accountability Initiatives

Required by SB 1326:

- DCF quality office
- Increased standards for contractors
- New reporting on outcomes
- Child welfare workforce initiatives to address turnover

Health and Human Services Committee

Colleen Burton, Chair

Hilary Brazzell, Policy Chief Christa Calamas, Staff Director (850) 717-4840



Questions?